Now, for the weather
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Wind, rain, sleet, and snow are words we often take for granted.

Military weather observers and forecasters are intimately aware of the inherent dangers that can occur when the weather changes.

Strategic planning requiring troop movements, navy maneuvers, and air craft missions all depend on the accuracy of the weather forecast.

Day-to-day operations of the 607th Weather Squadron supply weather information to the G-2 and G-3 shops, NBC defense, counter special operations force, as well as the Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation.

"We have seen the importance of weather; high winds and high seas, as well as temperature and rainfall have effects on counter SOF, Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical (NBC) operations and rear operations in general." said Maj. Peter Roohr, Director of Operations for the 607th WS.

The Chief of Staff looks to the 607th WS to ensure resource protection. Troops could be caught in a mudslide or swept down a river and drowned. A few years ago at Ulchi Focus Lens (UFL) winds were so strong a truck was blown over. The 607th WS can help prevent such incidents by giving advance warning and accurate forecasts.

A weather observer's primary job is to take readings of temperature, winds, cloud types and precipitation and then transmit that data over the Internet, telephone, carrier pigeon, or whatever it takes to get the information to the Automated Weather Network.

"The heart and soul of weather forecasting is the observers in several areas." said TSGT Garth L. Getgen, a USAF weather forecaster on day shift.

The forecaster accesses the observations transmitted to AWN to determine what the upcoming weather will be like. To gage weather moving into a specific area, one has to look at surrounding and even distant areas. Without knowing what's going on in remote areas and what direction weather cells are moving, forecasters cannot predict weather activity in their area of responsibility.

For exercise purposes, the 607th has five field-deployment units that go out just like the infantry units. Their observations are transmitted to the 607th where the data is evaluated prior to retransmitting to AWN. These remote field units support customers such as tactically deployed aviation (helicopter) units, as well as Army armor and infantry units with weather information.

Typically the observer reports their observations every hour. When inclement weather moves into an area, the observations are fed on the half-hour if not constantly for such operations such as air or boatlifts. When the weather is cooperative like this time of year, there are not many changes to keep up with.

"During UFL some parts of Korea had typhoons and monsoon related heavy rainfall (10-12 inches over 2 to 3 days)." said SSGT Scot Monroe, USAF forecaster.

An additional responsibility of the 607th weather squadron is to function as communications back-up. If the primary weather unit goes down, the 607th becomes the alternate weather source and would take over the responsibility of forecasting the weather for the entire peninsula.

"It's easy to look outside and see what is going on here, but the real challenge is in predicting weather elsewhere." said Getgen.